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ABSTRACT

Beginning with a brief critique of the behavioral science approach to educational administration, this paper traces the roots of an alternative perspective through examination of the new sociology of education and critical social theory. Arguing then for the location of a critical practice of educational administration in a cultural analysis of the habitus of education, the author discusses the metaphorical, ritualistic, and linguistic features of that habitus with reference to empirical studies. Fianlly, it is argued that the practice of a critical and reflexive educational administration is necessarily located within a critique of domination and a commitment to struggle in the interest of a better world. (Author/MLF)

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# TOWARDS A CRITICAL PRACTICE OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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# ABSTRACT

Beginning with a brief critique of the behavioural science approach to educational administration this paper traces the roots of an alternative perspective in an examination of the New Sociology of Education and Critical Social Theory. Arguing then for the location of a Critical Practice of Educational Administration in a cultural analysis of the habitus of education the metaphorical, ritualistic and linguistic features of that habitus are discussed with reference to empirical studies. Finally, it is argued that the practice of a critical and reflexive educational administration is necessarily located within a critique of domination and a commitment to struggle in the interest of a better world.

## Educational Administration as Behavioural Science

Though misconceived and misdirected the quest for a behavioural science of educational administration continues. Despite the revolution brought about in natural science by Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and by relativity and quantum theory the scientific model propogated by mainstream theorists of educational administration is still firmly rooted in Newtonian physics. Despite the acknowledgement of philosophers of the impossibility of eliminating evaluative judgements from the interpretative frameworks within which facts are both sought and understood, mainstream theorists of educational administration continue to declare the incommensurability of fact and value. Despite the social theorists large scale abandonment of the quest for a value-free science of society the mainstream theorists of educational administration still pursue positivistic attempts to develop generalisable laws and principles which will explain the structure and dynamics of (all?) organisations.

Perhaps the most outstanding example of this conservative and anachronistic approach to educational administration is Hoy and Miskel's (1978, 1982) widely used text. Educational Administration: Theory, Research and Practice is in fact a highly developed example of view of educational administration rooted in the 'theory moment' of the 1960's; one which remains blissfully unaware of the widely acknowledged revolutions in science, philosophy and social theory mentioned above. But perhaps the most remarkable characteristic of this book is the total absence of any awareness or discussion of contemporary educational issues. The tendency of educational administrators to seperate administrative issues from educational issues and to ignore the latter has been noted previously by Callaghan (1962) in his discussion of the cult of efficiency. Hoy and Miskel's text is a perfect contemporary illustration of this tendency. It is as though the administration of schools

and school systems consists entirely of processes of motivation, leadership, decision-making and communication conducted by professional bureaucrats who are responsible for organisational climate, effectiveness and change. Readers may search in vain for reference to a single educational idea. There is, for instance, a total, deafening silence concerning the fundamental message systems of schools: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation (Bernstein, 1975). There is an equally amazing one-paragraph discussion of the relationship between administration and student achievement which suggests that we should not be tempted to ask questions about this crucial relationship (cf. Erickson, 1979) lest 'such a question traps us in "the cognitive fallacy".' (p. 193)

The pathology of such an approach to educational administration is surely indicated both by its ignorance of contemporary science (Bates, 1980a), philosophy (Hodgkinson, 1978) and social theory (Tipton, 1977) and by its exclusion of educational concerns (cf. Boyd and Crowson, 1981). A theory of educational administration that divorces fact from value, theory from practice, rationality from commonsense and education from administration is unlikely to be capable to guiding the administrators hand (Greenfield, 1981).

## Educational Administration and the New Sociology of Education

There are close parallels between the 'old' sociology of education and the behavioural science approach to educational administration represented by Hoy and Miskel (see Bates, 1980a). There are also close parallels between the critiques (Bates, 1978, 1980a, 1980b, 1981a, 1981b, 1981c). At the heart of the critiques is the question of the relationship between knowledge and action.

The New Sociology of Education is, in fact part of the wider movement in social theory which rejects the pursuit of value-free explanations of

social structure, demanding instead a new focus for theory which relates understanding to action. These demands, originating in the 1960's, reflect

> an increasingly urgent concern with the issues of power, equity and distribution, not only as a subject matter for an academic sociology, but also as the substance of a 'reflexive' sociology through which the sociologist is committed to action. . .It is the relationship between knowledge and action which is at the heart of the 'new' sociology for, in challenging the positivistic accounts of social structure which dominated the sociology of the post-war period, the new sociology has reasserted the interelationship of the problems of deciding what is, what might be and what should be in society.
>
> (Bates, 1978, : 3)

In essence, the new sociology reintroduced an ethical dimension to social theory which had been largely excluded by positivistic social science. To this end the New Sociology of Education in particular focusses on: the development of an epistemology that takes account of the social bases of understanding; a systematic analysis of relationships between social, cultural, epistemological and educational domination; the ways in which such structures of domination control the practices of teachers; and the improvement of practice through processes of critical reflection on the relation between practice and the potential for human emancipation (Bates, 1980a, 1981c).

The restatement of such concerns, largely ignored or derided by the positivists, has,nonetheless 'caused quite a stir' (Boyd and Crowson, 1981: 328) and is a provocative articulation of public discontents not entirely irrelevant to education administration.

Indeed, while the pursuit of a behavioural science of educational administration has continued behind the closed doors of academe, in the real world

> sociopolitical developments have brought about significant changes in both the conception and practice of public school administration. The pressures placed on schools in behalf of equality, efficiency and effectiveness, and the performance problems these pressures brought to light, have led to far-reaching changes: a virtual revolution in authority relations; a sense of crisis about the normative order of schools; a serious decline in public confidence and support; and substantial changes in school governance.
>
> (Boyd & Crowson, 1981: 356)

Clearly the world of action continues to produce rapid and widespread change which the advocates of a behavioural science approach to educational administration neither acknowledge, understand nor influence. But the problem for theoretician and administrator alike is (vide Marx) not only to understand but also to influence such change. Such influence, as Hodgkinson suggests, demands not only understanding but a commitment to action:

> the professor of administrative philosophy on the one hand, the administrative practitioner on the other; both must at some point. . .adopt a commitment. And this is something which goes beyond the limits of any ethical *discussion*.
>
> (Hodgkinson, n.d., see also 1978)

But how are we to understand and what is the basis and nature of our commitment to action?

The New Sociology of Education spoke originally to these issues in terms of an explicitly relativistic epistemology; a phenomenological analysis of educational processes; a neo-marxist structural analysis of class power and control; and an existential commitment to principles of emancipation and human betterment (see Bates, 1980b, 1981a, 1981b; Clark and Freeman, 1979). There were, however, certain problems with this formulation. For instance, the incoherence of a position of extreme relativism in epistemology or ethics (Pring, 1972; Lawton, 1975); the limitations of phenomenology as a basis for judgement or action (Bates, 1980b;

Clark & Freeman, 1979); the paradoxical determinism of a marxist theory of reproduction (Demaine, 1977; Grierson, 1978). The later work of Young (1977) and his collaborators (Young & Whitty, 1977) attempts (in my view, unsuccessfully) to answer these issues and to show how the major concerns of the new sociology of education relate to the transformation of educational practice. In this, the new sociology of education

> reasserts the dignity of teachers, their importance in the achievement of human betterment, and offers grounds for rejecting the encroachment of bureaucratic controls and the mechanisation of pedagogy directed towards extending the control of social, cultural and economic elites over the processes of education.
>
> (Bates, 1981a)

Given these themes it is somewhat surprising that so few links have been made with the work of phenomenologists of organisational theory in education such as Greenfield (1973, 1978, 1979, 1980) or with the advocates of critical social theory either in its European form (Adorno, 1978; Habermas, 1971, 1974, 1976, 1979, Horkheimer, 1974; Marcuse, 1964) or in its North American application to education (Giroux, 1981; Foster, 1980a, 1980b; Wexler, 1976). In particular the apparent ignorance of the traditions of critical social theory is disappointing because firstly, the problems at the root of the new sociology of education are also those that preoccupy the critical social theorists and, secondly, because critical social theory appears to have resolved some of the more troubling theoretical difficulties faced by the new sociology of education. Both the problems and the resolutions are peculiarly appropriate to the study and practice of educational administration.

## Educational Administration and Critical Social Theory

While it is not my intention to give a full account of critical social theory in this paper certain key features demand recognition before passing to the primary purpose of the paper: the construction of a framework for the critical practice of educational administration. These features have

been admirably summarised elsewhere (see especially Foster, 1980a; Giroux, in press).

Contemporary developments in critical social theory rely, in a large part, on the work of Habermas (1976, 1979) who argues that modern states face three interelated crises in the areas of rationality, legitimacy and motivation.

The crisis of rationality is rooted in the positivistic separation of fact from value, means from ends, politics from administration, and the exclusion of discourse over ends, values and purposes. Thus the only criterion available for the evaluation of governmental/administrative actions is their ability to provide technical, rational, scientific solutions to administrative problems. However conflicts in the political, social and ethical arena (between the principles of democracy and meritocracy, for instance) deny the possibility of rational administrative solutions to problems of equity and distribution, thus a rationality deficit emerges as a result of the technologisation of administration.

The second crisis, that of legitimacy, flows from this crisis of rationality. The creation of a rational/scientific technology of administration, at the same time as it increases efficiency and steering capacity, decreases the possibility of establishing effective normative structures that might guide action. The very development of administrative rationality undermines cultural traditions that bind individuals together and legitimate the processes of government. Moreover, scientific administrative systems are incapable of generating the alternative cultural norms necessary for the legitimation of government. The absence of such cultural norms leads to a crisis in legitimacy.

The third crisis, that of motivation, arises from the two previous crises in that they result, at the individual level in feelings of alienation and powerlessness, a loss of meaning, purpose and commitment, and an inability to participate in discourse directed towards the regeneration

of such concerns.

The solution to these crises, suggests Habermas, lies in the development of an expanded rationality which involves practical discourse over norms and values as well as over means and facts. In such practical discourse the cultural traditions, aspirations, values and commitments of individuals would be negotiated in a form of communicative ethics which is implicit in human speech. Such discourse is essentially a practical discourse which relates to the questions of what can, might, and should be done in specific situations. In Habermas's words such discourse supports a normative order directed towards "emancipation, individuation, and the extension of communication free of domination" (1971: 93).

Thus, the theoretical position put forward by Habermas provides a sympathetic context for the assertions of radical theorists of management (Denhardt, and Denhardt, 1979; Hales, 1974; Wood and Kelly, 1978; Ramos, 1978) and of educational administration (Greenfield, 1973; Hodgkinson, 1978; Bates, 1980). In particular, the insistance of critical social theory on the incorporation of discussion over normative issues in practical discourse and its commitment to processes of communication and discussion free from the distorting effects of domination matches well with Greenfield's observation that in the world of everyday life

> what many people seem to want from schools is that schools reflect the values that are central and meaningful in their lives. If this view is correct, schools are cultural artifacts that people struggle to shape in their own image. Only in such forms do they have faith in them; only in such forms can they participate comfortably in them.
>
> (1973: 570)

But how are we to achieve the preconditions for such practical discourse? How are we to create administratively educational situations free from the distorting effects of domination? How are we to resolve the crises of

rationality, legitimacy and motivation?

## Organisation, Culture and Praxis

Greenfield, among others, has argued for some time now for an essentially phenomenological view of organisations. This view sees organisations as accomplishments; as consequences of human action directed by individual will, intention and value which provide contexts for the negotiation and construction of meaning, moral order and power. As such, organisations are essentially arbitrary definitions of reality 'woven in symbols and expressed in language' (1980: 44).

Such a perspective does not deny the facts of organisational reality but interprets them within a wider context which sees them as 'structures of consciousness as well as features of face-to-face settings' (Brown, 1978: 365). Thus, rationality, for instance, is seen not as a property of organisations or as an abstract standard by which behaviour may be judged but as an achievement.

> . . .rationality neither instructs us as to what action to take, nor is it a property inherent in the social system as such. Instead, rationality emerges in interaction and is then used retrospectively to legitimize what has already taken place or is being enacted.
>
> (Brown, 1978: 369)

From such a perspective, rather than organisations being entities whose internal and external interactions are determined by the causal laws of behavioural and social science 'formal organisations are essentially processes of organising enacted by persons' (Brown, 1978: 371). Thus,

> the study of reality creation in organisations is a study of power, in that definitions of reality, normalcy, rationality and so on serve as paradigms that in some sense govern the conduct permissible within them.
>
> (Brown, 1978: 371)

Moreover, as with scientific paradigms, organisational paradigms are not only formal structures of thought but are also constituted by the language, rhetoric and practices of the organisational community. The power of such paradigms lies in their ability to define what shall be included or excluded from discussion, practice and therefore consciousness (Brown, 1978; Giroux, 1981).

Paradigms, however, are both constructed and contested. They are subject to periodic overthrow or supercession. As with scientific communities formal organisations construct defences and mechanisms of suppression in order to protect and sustain dominant paradigms. These mechanisms are essentially symbolic, communicated through the language, rituals, and metaphors that define the nature and meaning of the organisation and celebrate the purposive intentions of organisational life. In short organisations are cultures rather than structures and it is the maintenance and contestation of what is to constitute the culture of organisational life that provides the dynamic of rationality, legitimation and motivation in organisations. This dynamic is the praxis of administration.

## The Cultural Habitus of Educational Administration

Foster (1980b) Giroux (1981), Greenfield (1979, 1980), and Bates (1980a, 1981c) have all argued the necessity of constructing a cultural analysis of educational administration as an alternative to the inherently sterile pursuit of a deterministic behavioural science. This is not solely because the dynamics of organisation can better be understood through such a perspective but also because educational organisations, above all, are committed to the maintenance, transmission and recreation of culture. Culture is, in fact, the prime resource of educational practice (Bates, 1981c). Thus, a theory of educational administration that ignores this central preoccupation can hardly be counted as a theory of educational administration in any very serious sense.

It is culture that gives meaning to life. The beliefs, languages, rituals, knowledge, conventions, courtesies and artifacts - in short the cultural baggage of any group, are the resources from which the individual and social identities are constructed. They provide the framework upon which the individual constructs his understanding of the world and of himself. Part of this cultural baggage is factual. It is empirical, descriptive and objective. Another part of this cultural baggage, perhaps the greater part, is mythical. It is concerned not with facts but with *meaning*. That is, the interpretative and prescriptive rules which provide the basis for understanding and action.

Malinowski, for instance, argued that

> myth fulfils in primitive culture an indispensible function: it expresses, enhances and codifies belief; it safeguards and enforces morality; it vouches for the efficiency of ritual and contains the practical rules for the guidance of man (1948: 79).

At the other extreme, as Bailey (1977) points out, Sorel's definition is equally acceptable

> . . .men who are participating in a great social movement always picture their coming action as a battle in which their cause is certain to triumph. These constructions. . . I propose to call myths (Sorel, 1908, in Bailey, 1977: 16)

While it is unlikely that many of the myths that give meaning and purpose to schools activities approach the apocalyptic vision of a Second Coming or Marx's revolution it can readily be seen that myths are not confined to great social movements but are a fundamental feature of everyday life in schools as elsewhere. Consequently schools, alongside other public institutions, are battle-grounds in which contending mythologies complete for the holy grail - control of the future.

Myths are, then, an important cultural resource in schools - they alone can give meaning and purpose to schools' activities. They are intimately built into the day-to-day life of schools and in an important sense they constitute the groundwork of belief, morality, ritual and rules

within which social and personal identity are managed. Any adequate theory or effective practice of educational administration must necessarily, therefore, be concerned with the nature of the myths that guide the organisational life of schools and with the characteristics of interpersonal life through which such myths are perpetuated and negotiated.

Three key aspects of the cultural myths of schools are particularly important: metaphors, rituals and negotiations. These are the aspects of life in schools that provide the means through which individuals and groups attempt to manage the cultural reality of the school and shape it to fit their vision of the future. Administrators need to be sensitive to this process and aware of its importance in the processes of rationalisation, legitimation and motivation involved in schooling.

## Metaphors and the Management of Meaning

It was Wittgenstein (1953) who spoke of the bewitchment of our intelligence by the means of language. He also spoke of the need for liberation from such bewitchment - the need for the fly to find his way out of the fly-bottle. The directions for escape, he insisted, were not to be found in the dictionary but in the world of real experience where the meaning of words is revealed in their use. The language we use and the way in which we use it are the keys to our particular bewitchment.

We are often unaware of the associations that crowd in on us in our use of particular phrases. The images they conjure up may be commonplace. Alternatively the metaphors we employ may be, or may once have been, vivid. Nietzsche (1968) argued that the use of metaphor is basic to the intellectual processes we use to establish truth and meaning. Moreover, this impulse towards the formation of metaphor, linked as it is with the processes of categorisation, classification and association is identified with the 'will to power' (Nietzsche, 1968; Bowers, 1980). Metaphors allow us to structure and create meaning out of experience. They may also act like

fly bottles, to keep us trapped in invisible prisons. They can, moreover, mislead us when we apply inappropriate metaphors to situations better understood in other ways.

Shifts in the use of metaphor are not always trivial. They may, as Kuhn (1970) suggests, be basic to the nature of scientific revolutions and involve a major shift in world view. For instance, the shift from an animistic view of the universe to a mechanistic one brought about by Newton and his philosophical colleagues, Bacon and Locke, involve a major shift in attitude towards nature which became for the first time view as accessible, knowable and *controlable*. The metaphor involved, that of the machine, allowed not only a transformation of production but also a transformation of society which could now be viewed as a mechanical system.

As Hamilton (1980) has shown, the metaphor of the machine or the mechanical system was rapidly applied to education. In this process the work of Adam Smith and his harmonisation of the ideas of individual and collective self interest through the metaphor of the invisible hand was crucial in the development and legitimisation of simultaneous instruction. Such instruction was a key practice in the development of mass education.

Shifts in the fundamental metaphors which we use to explore and interpret the world of nature and the nature of society have far reaching repercussions. The metaphor of the machine is frequently used in education and forms the basis of much of the language of systems engineers who use the metaphor in much the same way as Adam Smith.

> Systems in many respects resemble machines. . .A system is an imaginary machine, invented to connect together in fancy those different movements and effects which are already in reality performed (in Hamilton 1980, : 4).

Smith's legacy is still with us in the contemporary language of cybernetics.

> today the spokesmen for cybernetic systems theory argue that formal organisations are (or are like) a giant computer with its input and output, its feedback loops, and its programs. This machine - the organisation - is in turn guided by a servomechanism - the techno-administrative elite.
>
> (Brown, 1978: 375)

Such metaphors profoundly, and often unconsciously determine our attitudes to the world, to people, to events and to action. Teachers and administrators and their pupils use metaphors continually to represent relationships and to define the power structures which organise behaviour. Metaphor is a major weapon in the presentation of self and the management of situations. Such metaphors not infrequently obscure the interests of dominating elites, and present particular partisan views of the world as uncontestable descriptions of the way things are. Positivistic and mechanical accounts of social structure and process are frequently of this kind. Phenomenological or critical analysis however allows us

> to see this (cybernetic) imagery as a thing made, as a symbolic artifact rather than as the fact. (It allows us) to reject it as a literal description of how the organisation "really" is and to unmask it as a legitimating ideology. By doing a close textual analysis, we can make it clear that in the paradigm of cybernetics the vocabularies of personal agency, ethical accountability, and political community have atrophied. In their place, the organisation, initially conceived as serving human values, becomes a closed system directed by elites and generating its own self-maintaining ends.
>
> (Brown, 1978: 375)

A critical analysis of the metaphors that articulate, (if indeed they do not constitute) our beliefs and actions is, therefore, one powerful way of ensuring that we do not remain trapped within the evidently transparent prison of the fly-bottle.

Metaphors not only intrude on the processes of educational administration in a grand fashion as in the language of cybernetics, they also directly affect our negotiations and relations with each other at the most personal level. In the common, everyday language of schools metaphors about children and metaphors about schools exist and compete. They are, as Foshay (1980) points out, frequently varied, contradictory and powerful. Metaphors of the child as flower, nigger, enemy, cog, machine, chamelon, miniature adult, psychopath, gentleman, or reasoner, are common currency in staffrooms as our metaphors of the school as factory,

clinic or bureaucracy. The nature, occurence and emphases of such metaphors are vitally important to administrators for the 'tone' or 'climate' of the school has a lot to do with the metaphors employed and the relationships they bear to the reality of interpersonal relations. Parents and pupils are, for instance, particularly scathing in their evaluations of schools which use one metaphor (community) in their rhetoric and another metaphor (factory) to guide their activity.

Such conflicts of metaphor are sources of great debate and tension within education systems and schools. But the tension is not simply a semantic one. The metaphors which people use are often representative of the kind of future (the social movement) to which they are consciously or unconsciously committed. Such cultural commitment is frequently passionate and contains views of man, society and education which are closely related to the meaning and identity of the individual.

Metaphors carry both personal identity and social committment. Schools are instrumental in the support or denial of such identity. They are, therefore, important cultural artifacts and the struggle to shape them is closely related, as Greenfield reminds us, to the values that are central and meaningful in people's lives.

The relationship between educational metaphors and individual and social identity is clearly and powerfully illustrated in the work and ideas of Paulo Freire. His work relies on a series of opposed metaphors: cultural domination versus freedom; the culture of silence versus cultural action, education as banking versus education as praxis. In each of the metaphors education is related to social organisation. On the one side education as banking, the conspiracy of silence, cultural domination are related to forms of social oppression of militarist, sexist, racist, class kinds. On the other side education is praxis , liberation, autonomy, cultural action for freedom. The form that education takes in schools is, he argues, intimately bound up with the personal and social identity of

individuals (Friere, 1972).

Friere's view is clearly developed within the context of third-world countries. The relationships between views of man, society, education and the organisation of learning do, however, apply to our contemporary society, for any systematic organisation of learning incorporates into its structure not only content, but also forms of relationship built on the metaphors which encapsulate our view of society and people.

Education systems are then, in a sense, a physical working out of the cultural metaphors and myths held by educators and administrators. Many of the metaphors we employ are, for instance, ritualised in the forms of organisation, ceremony and interaction which are typical of schools. Jackson (1968) for instance, shows how the organisational structure of schools emphasises and demands certain kinds of relationships between teachers and pupils. The facts of crowdedness, praise and power provide an essentially coercive environment in which relationships between teachers and pupils are ritualised. The metaphors of child as nigger, cog, machine, are translated into cultural reality through the rituals of classroom interaction.

Again Dreeben (1968), following Parsons (1959) argues that the organisation of the school is devoted to creating social and psychological situations that encourage, when compared with the family, activities leading to the development of independence, achievement, universalism and specificity in children. These metaphors or norms are constructed by the social organisation of the school. The organisation of time, place and relationships shapes the consciousness of individuals through their structure and the treatment accorded to particular groups.

Jean Anyon (1980) has argued this position in more detail showing how the ways in which pupils 'work' is treated in schools (in terms of the content of their work, their relationships with teachers, the products of their activity) can be differentiated according to social class. The nature of the metaphors which are interpreted and enforced through the school's

organisation are different for different children. Moreover these differences apparently relate to the kinds of work relationships found in different occupational groups. Thus, for working class children, conflictual relationships are predominant (child as nigger, child as enemy). This form of relationship in school is also borne out by the work of Willis (1977) and Birkstead (1976) among others. Middle class children tend, however, to meet bureaucratised relationships in the school (child as cog, child as machine) and be subjected to rituals of evaluation, classification and certification (Cicourel and Kitsuse, 1963). Upper class schools, Anyon argues, tend to define work relationships in terms of negotiation and symbolic capital where the dominant metaphors are those of manipulability, adaptability and effectiveness (child as reasoner, child as adult). Thus, the metaphors we use to classify and interpret the world are translated into work structures which relate to wider social relations and to structures outside the school.

It would seem therefore that a critical practice of educational administration would necessarily involve observation, analysis and reflection on the metaphorical currency negotiated and exchanged within the school. It might also on occasion involve the negotiation of a different currency.

## Administration, Ritualisation and Control

Along with metaphors, rituals are a potent mechanism of control. Although the meaning of rituals may be redundant (i.e. no longer explicit) the relationships represented in those rituals are frequently both metaphorical and practical specifications of intergroup power. Ritualistic acts revivify the relationships which constitute particular forms of order in social situations. Schools are saturated with rituals. The management of ritual in schools is an important element in the maintenance of order, for rituals celebrate both unifying and differentiating features in the social structure of the school (Bernstein, 1975).

Rituals can often be so powerful as to take on a life of their own. Conformity to rituals may be so complete as to govern movement, place, time, language, sequences of activity, participants response and the use of artifacts. Their shape, the metaphors they utilize, the symbols that guide responses are powerful means of control. These ritual structures of communication are rather obvious in churches, rallies, television interviews, cafeterias and football matches. They are also obvious to outsiders describing what goes on in schools. They are not always obvious to those who participate more or less permanently in the rituals of schools. Because the form and meaning of the rituals are so well known their impact can be underestimated. Even the effect of new forms of social organisation, or innovation in curriculum structures and communication structures can be constrained by the habits derived from ritual.

For example, there are numerous instances of curriculum innovations being 'turned' to fit the pre-existing structures of schools activities (Whiteside, 1976). Even when not only curriculum, but the whole organisational structure of the school is reformed through the introduction of an alternative technology the capacity of schools to maintain their own ritual structures is very strong (Popkewitz, 1981, Popkewitz, Tabachnik, & Whelage, 1980).

This seems to happen despite the intentions of individual teachers or school administrators (Shipman, 1974). Part of the reason for this is the threat to those ritualised forms of action and meaning which form a background to learning. As Shipman puts it, 'every change in routine is a threat to teacher-pupil relations and standard of work' (1974, p. 176). Routines as ritualised relations are both redundant and powerful. Redundant, because they are not consciously thought about, because they are accepted without examination or question. Powerful, because they are unconsciously followed and unquestionably accepted. Rituals and routines in fact facilitate the direct focussing of attention on learning. They are the major constituents of the hidden curriculum of schools.

This hidden curriculum and the metaphors it ritualises in everyday commonsense activity and understanding is in essence, an administrative curriculum. The links between language, metaphor and ritual and their celebration of particular social ideals or myths, forms the essential administrative culture of the school. The culture is a translation of myths into action and relationships.

A critical practice of educational administration would involve a reflective analysis and an active intervention and reconstruction of such ritual structures so that they celebrate the intended educational purposes of the school community rather than the redundant purposes of a previous administration.

## Educational Administration and the Language of Negotiation

Administrative intervention in the metaphorical and ritual performances which form a texture of school life must, perforce, be conducted through the means of language. Language is not only a tool of critical reflection through which we may demystify our world but also the medium of action through which we shape it. As Gronn (1982) suggests 'the administrative setting is a speech milieu which organisation members enact in their talk with one another' (p. 1). Thus talk is 'an instrument for accomplishing administrative control' (1982: 1). But, as Gronn points out in his analysis of a principals administrative talk with his staff, this talk is by no means simply directive on the part of the administrator nor automatically compliant on the part of the staff. Indeed as Gronn reports of his research

> Contrary. . .to the image of the administrator in much of the management literature as 'directing', 'commanding', 'planning', etc, as if administering is a unilateral and unidirectional action performed on a set of anonymous employees, here is an administrator seemingly caught in a mesh not of his own making. Prior to the staff meeting he is being controlled rather than being in control.
>
> (Gronn, 1982: 15)



What emerges in the course of the administrative performance is a negotiation in which both language, territory and status is employed by the

principal to gain advantage and shape agreement and consent over decision. Gronn's analysis presents us with a picture of administration far removed from the tidy conceptual schemes of positivistic, behavioural and managerial science. Indeed neither place, nor time, nor metaphor nor language seems predictable.

> Administration can take place anywhere. It is time-consuming and it observes no set time schedule. It follows no set order or format for it can arise out of a chance meeting and can include all kinds of matters that might be routine, spontaneous, trivial or highly eventful in character. The school principal free-wheels. He is a classic drifter moving in and out of different locations and areas, in and out of relationships and encounters. . . .the dynamics of this activity show it to be antithetical to the obsession with order and precision evident in (writings on) scientific management.
>
> (Gronn, 1982: 21)

The dependence of administrators on the use of language to shape and determine action is the third major aspect of administrative culture. It is a dynamic process that bears some relationship to the organisational structure of the school but also has a degree of autonomy from it. This autonomy is a result of the necessary processes of negotiation that occur between groups or individuals who proclaim differing mythologies and who represent contending interests. One common example of such negotiation results from the widespread conflict between those holding representative and participatory views of democracy.

The representative view is readily compatible with forms of bureaucratic, centralised control. It is also compatible with banking education and with certain forms of social control. The participative view is often opposed to centralised bureaucratic control and decision making and embraces a liberationist, activist, constructivist view of learning and the learner. It is a view which argues, as Greenfield does, that only through participation in the struggle to shape institutions in their own image can people find purpose and meaning in their lives.

These ideas are both 'large' ideas in that their opposed myths form the the ideological structure of much contemporary political and economic

debate and 'small' ideas in that the myths are incorporated one way or another in the structure of our daily lives. An interesting illustration of the conflict and negotiation of these competing views is found in Hunter's (1980) discussion of the administrative culture of a secondary school, and its conflict with the politics of participation. In particular Hunter's discussion is interesting because of its analysis of the headmasters role in the negotiations which shows the way in which the power to determine the *forms* of negotiation, if you like, the rituals that will be adopted, allows the incorporation or exclusion of the myths held by other groups in the school. The backstage culture and the upfront culture of teachers are markedly different. Why? Because of the administrative ritualisation of the negotiations and the acceptance of particular forms of power and authority as 'natural'.

Hunter's paper is an attempt to show how various differing definitions of participation and democracy operate alongside each other in schools and how partial negotiations of the conflicts between these definitions occur. It is also an attempt to show how administrative power affects such negotiations by excluding various groups from effective participation, and defining alternative proposals as technically impossible. This example is a paradigm case of the use of a technical definition of administration to exclude the debate and discussion over normative issues. The power to define situations in particular ways is, then, not the least attribute of administrative control. In particular, the power to define the ways in which culture is presented and structured in the school is of paramount importance.

These illustrations indicate that the third major component of a critical practice of educational administration revolves around the use of language as a mechanism of control in negotiations over action. The comparison of the use of language in the discourse of negotiations in the administrative context of the school with the conditions of ideal discourse

outlined by Habermas may well prove very revealing of the ways in which certain forms of domination are imposed via the language of administering. A critical educational administration would be in part directed towards the clarification, examination and redirection of such discourse.

## Conclusion

Culture, as Bourdieu suggests, is the most important resource available to the school. The interiorization of cultural patterns is the most profound effect that the school has on both teachers and pupils. But culture is not a static set of values, beliefs, and understandings, rather

> it is a common set of previously assimilated master patterns from which, by an 'art of invention' similar to that involved in the writing of music, an infinite number of individual patterns directly applicable to specific situations is generated (1971, p. 192).

Thus the myths, metaphors and rituals of the school contribute to the reproduction of ways of thought in the individual.

> Every individual owes to the type of schooling he has received a set of basic, deeply interiorized master patterns on the basis of which he subsequently acquires other patterns, so that the system of patterns by which his thought is organised owes the specific character not only to the nature of the patterns constituting it, but also to the frequency with which these are used and to the level of consciousness at which they operate.
>
> (Bourdieu, 1971: 193)

The fact that differing definitions of culture (competing myths and ideologies) exist in the school makes the determination of what is to count as culture in the school problematic. Which mythology is to prevail is not altogether a matter of reason but also a matter of social, moral and political commitment and, most importantly for administrators, a matter of power and control.

Very little work has been done which explains the impact of administrative processes on the culture of schools. But the impact of administrative processes on the master patterns which are reproduced

through schooling is obviously an area of great importance. As Bantock (1973) argues 'the basic educational dilemma of our time is a cultural one and affects the nature of the meanings to be transmitted by the school'. Moreover, administrative control of the central message systems of the school (curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation, Bernstein, 1975) as well as processes of training and professionalisation (Popkewitz, 1979; Smith, 1979) and the allocation of physical resources (Young & Whitty, 1977; Grace, 1978) ensure that constraints exist on the definitions of culture which are able to be reproduced through schools. These constraints as Waller argued in 1932 (1967), ensure that schools act as conservative agencies of social control through their control of the cultural definitions of situations.

> The schools may be viewed as an agency for imposing preformed definitions of the situation. Education, as has been truly said, is the art of imposing on the young the definitions of situations current and accepted in the group which maintains the schools. The school is thus a gigantic agency of social control. It is part of its function to transmit to the young the attitudes of the elders, which is does by presenting to them social situations as the elders have defined them. . .From a fact that situations may be defined in different ways and by different groups arises a conflict of definitions of situations and we may see the whole process of personal and group conflict which centers about the school as a conflict of contradictory definitions of situations. The fundamental problem of school discipline may be stated as the struggle of students and teachers to establish their own definitions of situations in the life of the school.
>
> (Waller, 1967: 296)

The culture of the school is therefore the product of conflict and negotiation over definitions of situations. The administrative influence on school language, metaphors, myths and ritual is a major factor in the determination of the culture which is reproduced in the consciousness of teachers and pupils. Whether that culture is largely based on metaphors of participatory democracy, equity and cultural liberation, or on metaphors of capital accumulation, hierarchy and domination is at least partly attributable to the exercise of administrative authority during the

negotiation of what is to count as culture in the school. A critical practice of educational administration would, necessarily, be reflective concerning such negotiations, placing them within the context of a critique of domination and a commitment to struggle in the interest of a better world.

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